

ABSTRACT

BREAKING OF OIL/WATER EMULSION

Process for separating an emulsion of a bituminous oil and water into a liquid water phase and a liquid bituminous oil phase, wherein the following steps are performed: (a) raising the temperature of the bituminous oil/water emulsion having a temperature of below 100 °C to a temperature of above 140 °C, and (b) performing a phase separation wherein a water phase and oil phase is obtained, wherein the heating of the emulsion in step (a) is effected by first mixing part of oil phase obtained in step (b) having a temperature of above 140 °C with the bituminous oil/water emulsion and subsequently raising the temperature of the resulting mixture to a temperature of above 140 °C by making use of indirect heat exchange means.